Application No.: 09/960673   Docket No.: SMQ-076 (P6310)

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of network storage i~~I~~n a network with a plurality of storage locations having attributes, ~~said attributes being characteristics of said storage locations,~~ a-the method; comprising the steps of:

    providing a software facility in communication over the network with the plurality of storage locations, the software facility ~~interfaced with said network for~~ identifying and allocating ~~said~~ the storage locations to a storage owner based on ~~the~~ at least one attributes of ~~said~~ the storage locations;

    receiving with ~~said~~ the software facility a network storage policy from an authorized user, ~~said~~ the authorized user having authority to control access to ~~said~~ the storage locations on ~~said~~ the network, ~~said~~ the storage policy including attribute requirements for at least one of said storage locations; and

    programmatically applying ~~said~~ the storage policy to storage decisions on ~~said~~ the network using ~~said~~ the software facility, ~~said~~ the storage decisions determining where data on ~~said~~ the network is stored.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said authorized user selects said storage location attributes in said network policy from a list of storage location attributes.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of:

    configuring a new storage location from at least two of the plurality of storage locations in order to provide specified attributes pursuant to said network storage policy.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 4 wherein a storage location is allocated based on matching a requested storage location attribute with ~~the~~ a storage location attribute identified by ~~said~~ the software facility.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 4 wherein a selected one of said storage locations is allocated based on matching a requested storage location attribute with an attribute of a new storage location dynamically configured by said software facility.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 4, comprising the further step of:

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placing an unallocated storage location into a pool of storage locations available to said software facility.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 comprising the further step of:
        placing a storage location into a pool of storage locations ~~unavailable to said software facility~~marked as previously allocated.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 comprising the further step of:
        placing a newly discovered unallocated storage locations into a pool of storage locations awaiting further action by ~~said~~ the software facility, ~~said~~ the newly discovered unallocated storage locations not having been previously identified by ~~said~~ the software facility.

10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 ~~4~~ wherein said software facility uses the Service Location Protocol (SLP) to identify available devices attached to said network.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~4~~ wherein at least one of ~~said~~ the plurality of devices ~~interfaced with said network~~ with storage locations thereon is a RAID (Redundant Array of Inexpensive/ Independent Disks) set.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~4~~ wherein a storage location with a specified attribute is provided by dynamically configuring a storage location in response to a request from a user of ~~said~~ the host electronic device ~~interfaced with said network~~.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~4~~, comprising the further steps of:
        setting a network policy for data storage, ~~said~~ the policy including storage location attributes requested by an authorized user, ~~said~~ the authorized user having authority to make network storage decisions; and
        configuring a new storage location from at least two of the plurality of storage locations in order to provide specified attributes pursuant to ~~said~~ the network policy.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 ~~4~~ wherein said software facility is located on said host electronic device.

15. (Currently Amended) A medium holding computer-executable instructions for a method of network storage i~~I~~n a network with a plurality of storage locations having attributes, ~~said~~

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~~attributes being characteristics of said storage locations, a medium holding computer-executable instructions for a~~ the method, comprising the steps of:

provision a software facility ~~interfaced~~ communicating over ~~with said~~ the network with the storage locations, the software facility ~~for~~ identifying and allocating ~~said~~ the storage locations based on the attributes of ~~said~~ the storage locations, said allocation being the association of a storage location with an owner, ~~said~~ the owner having permission to write data to ~~said~~ the storage location and read data from ~~said~~ the storage location;

receiving with ~~said~~ the software facility a network storage policy from an authorized user, ~~said~~ the authorized user having authority to make storage decisions on ~~said~~ the network, ~~said~~ the storage policy including attribute requirements for storage locations; and

programmatically applying ~~said~~ the storage policy to storage decisions on ~~said~~ the network using ~~said~~ the software facility, ~~said~~ the storage decisions determining where data on ~~said~~ the network is stored.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein said authorized user selects said storage location attributes in said network policy from a list of storage location attributes.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, comprising the further step of:
automatically configuring storage locations to provide specified attributes pursuant to said network storage policy.

18-21. (Cancelled)

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